MAR 3 1963
Approved For Release 2001/08/01 : CIA-RD
FOIAb3b
CPYRGHT
CPYRGHT

REP. ARENDS CITES THREAT IN LATIN AMERICA—

GOP Leader Warns of Red Subversion

By NASH STUBLEN
Tribune Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG — The House whip of the Republican Party said here yesterday Communist subversion in Central and South America is the "biggest threat" to the hemisphere at this time.

However, at the same time, U.S. Rep. Leslie C. Arends of Illinois, who is ranking GOP member of the House Armed Services Committee, said a constant eye must be kept on the military buildup in Cuba.

Arends' comments came in a press interview at the Port-O Call Inn on Tierra Verde where he is spending the weekend before making a major talk tomorrow night at a fund-raising dinner of the Pinellas Republican Executive Committee.

Other Views

In other views, Arends complained that the Democratic administration is holding back information on the Cuban situation, past and present, that should be made public.

Arends said, "Even top Republican leaders are not being told in advance of plans for fighting the Communist threat in Cuba and other South and Central American countries."

"I seriously question that we are getting all the truth about the Cuban situation as it exists today," Arends told newsmen.

"In other words," he continued, "from day-to-day, various testimony that comes before this committee and that—both in the Senate and the House—we are learning additional things as to what has transpired and what is presently taking place."

"We may be getting the truth but we're not getting all the truth," he said.

Agrees With Criticism

As an example, Arends agreed with U.S. Rep. H. R. Gross, R-Iowa in his criticism Friday of the administration "not leveling with us" on the spread of subversion.

This was a reference to testimony of John A. McCone, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

McCone said the training of Latin Americans in Cuba in subversion poses a serious threat.

Arends and U.S. Rep. William C. Cramer, who was in attendance at the interview also, said more Latin Americans have been trained in subversion than McCone revealed in his testimony.

Should the Communists get a foothold in these countries, Arends said, "We're in for real trouble in this hemisphere.

"Therefore, this must have the best attention right now. This cannot be put off. We must do what is necessary to stamp this out."

Meanwhile, Arends said the military buildup in Cuba may not seem as important now but it was "real important" not so long ago.

Arends said he's not in favor of the U.S. invading Cuba but, he added

"What bothers me is when we had the advantage in Cuba at this particular time—when Khrushchev and Kenhedy were in contact with one another—we didn't go ahead at that time and follow up on the site inspection."

He said there was testimony before the House Armed Services Committee from military leaders that 10 days prior to the missiles being taken out of Cuba, "We had the most tremendous buildup of military strength all around Cuba that we've ever had.

"In other words, this was a determination of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that we be prepared for any emergency and contingency in Cuba at that time."

Since Khrushchev was "so willing to take those things out he should have been forced to do the other things that were necessary," Arends said.

"I have to be honest: I don't know what, if any, kind of agreement was made between Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Kennedy. If Mr. Kennedy had to make any agreement for Khrushchev taking the missiles out, I don't know."

In other areas, Arends, who figures prominently in policy-making decisions of his party, said he didn't think President Kennedy would make a big push this year for his Medicare program but predicted he would wait until 1964—a presidential election year.

He said he favored economy in government before any tax cut bill is adopted. He predicted the foreign aid and appropriations bills would have the "roughest going ever" this year in the House.

Approved For Release 2001/08/01 : CIA-RDP75-00149R000100150051-2